DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 045 273 24 RC 004 923

AUTHOR Dreyer, Philip H.; Havighurst, Robert J.
TITLE The Self-Esteem of American Indian Youth: The Personal-Social Adjustment of American Indian Youth. National Study of American Indian Education. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Chicago Univ., Ill.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO BR-8-0147
PUB DATE Nov 70
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080147-2805
NOTE 20p.; Series 3, No. 8

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.10
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement, *American Indians, Aspiration, *Attitudes, Culture, Data Collection, Education, Eskimos, *National Surveys, Perception, *Self Concept, *Self Esteem, Social Attitudes, Testing

ABSTRACT

As a part of the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education, this study collected data from 2,007 Indian students (from 8 to 20 years of age) who attended public, mission, and Bureau of Indian Affairs' schools from Alaska to North Carolina using self-report questionnaires dealing with the Indian self-concept. The purpose of this paper is to report the findings of this study regarding the influences of age, sex, and minority status in school upon the self-concept of the various Indian groups studied. A comparison was made between Indian and non-Indian groups in an effort to answer questions on the uniqueness of the Indian groups within the larger society. The self-esteem and self-concept data from the study indicate that the great majority of Indian youth see themselves as fairly competent persons within their own social world but can be expected to show doubts about themselves in the non-Indian world. The study also concluded that the context within which an individual judges himself is critical to attaching meaning to his so-called "self-esteem" ratings and that self-concept must be studied more extensively before it is understood. Tables of statistics and a bibliography are appended. (EL)

ED 045273

RC 8 0147
PA-1
RC

THE NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

PROJECT OEC-0-8-08147-2805

FINAL REPORT

Series III. The Personal-Social Adjustment of American Indian Youth

No. 8 The Self-Esteem of American Indian Youth

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Philip H. Dreyer
Robert J. Havighurst
The University of Chicago
November, 1970

RC 004923

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians.

The Final Report Series will be available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service after they have been announced in Research in Education. They will become available commencing in August, 1970, and the Series will be completed by the end of 1970.

THE SELF-ESTEEM OF AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH

As reported in an earlier paper, most studies of American Indians have been conducted by anthropologists who relied upon participant observer reports and global estimates of what various studies called the "Indian self," "cultural assimilation," and "cultural identity." Many of these studies made references to the "self-concept," but few, if any, attempted to measure it carefully with psychological instruments. As part of the larger National Study of American Indian Education, this study collected data from over 2,000 Indian students who attended public, mission, and BIA schools from Alaska to North Carolina, using two paper and pencil self-report questionnaires dealing with the Indian student's self-concept.

The purpose of this paper is to report the findings of this study regarding the influences of age, sex, and majority or minority status in school upon the self-concept of the various Indian groups studied. For the most part, only comparisons between these Indian groups will be made. However, when appropriate, comparisons to a small group of Non-Indian Controls will also be made in the interest of adding information to questions of the uniqueness of the Indian groups within the larger society.

The self-concept data will be interpreted by readers in mental-health terms. It will be supposed that a favorable self-concept as measured by our instruments is evidence of good mental health. We have some reservations concerning this proposition, as will be seen, but we also believe that the self-concept as we have defined and measured it has some relevance to the mental health of Indian children and youth.

Sample

The final sample of American Indian students for whom instruments were satisfactorily completed consisted of 2,007 youths, 998 males, 1,009 females, ranging in age from eight to twenty. In addition, a non-Indian control group was included, consisting of 168 youths, 92 males and 76 females.

The groups whose scores are reported here were the following:

Plains Indians. Five Indian communities (Blackfeet, Sioux, Navaho) studied by the University of Colorado Field Center--253 boys and 242 girls in the age-range 8-20 inclusive.

Southwest Indians. Ten Indian communities or schools (Pima, Papago, Apache, Hopi, Laguna, Acoma, Navaho) studied by the University of Arizona Field Center--395 boys and 364 girls, aged 8-20.

Northwest Indians and Eskimos. Four Indian and one Eskimo communities or schools (Quinault, Makah, Tlingit, Eskimo) studied by the San Francisco State College Field Center--186 boys and 143 girls, aged 8-20.

Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians. Three schools in Wisconsin and two in Minnesota (Chippewa, Menominee, Sioux) studied by the University of Minnesota Field Center--97 boys and 85 girls, aged 8-17, mostly in schools where the majority of students were Indian. There was also a junior high school in Minneapolis, called School C,

with 21 Indian boys and 25 Indian girls, who were in the minority in this school, and are reported as part of the Urban Indian group.

Lumbee Indians (North Carolina and Baltimore). Two Indian schools in Robeson County (North Carolina) with 26 boys and 31 girls, aged 8-17. These were studied by the North Carolina State University Field Center.

Oklahoma Indians. Two communities in north central Oklahoma, with a minority of Indian students (Pawnee and Ponca)--26 boys and 39 girls. These were studied by the Oklahoma State University Field Center.

Urban Indians. Students in several elementary schools and a high school in Chicago, with 59 boys and 55 girls, age 8-17, studied by the University of Chicago staff, and 21 boys and 25 girls, age 12-17, who were students at a junior high school in Minneapolis, studied by the University of Minnesota staff. All of these Indians were in a minority among students at the schools they attended.

Chicago and Colorado Non-Indians (Controls). White, Black, and Oriental students in the same schools studied by the Chicago research staff and white students in the same schools studied by the Colorado staff, with 87 boys and 75 girls, age 8-17.

Method

Two paper and pencil self-report instruments were used. The first was a Twenty Statement Self-Esteem inventory modeled after a similar instrument developed by Coopersmith (1959, 1967). This consisted of a series of statements, such as "I think I'm as good as anybody else." and "No one pays much attention to me at school." to which the subject was asked to check one of two spaces labeled "like me" and "not like me." These statements reflected attitudes about the self in relation to peers, family, and school. The items were worded in both positive and negative forms to prevent response-set, and four items were repeated in different form to act as a check on the consistency of response. Each of the statements was scored "1" or "0" with "1" indicating positive self-regard. This resulted in the instrument having a possible range of scores from zero, indicating low "self-esteem," to twenty, indicating high "self-esteem."

The second instrument was a semantic differential inventory using the concept "myself" which was rated on a six-point scale for the adjective pairs "good-bad," "worthless-valuable," "happy-unhappy," "weak-strong," "lazy-active," "smart-dumb," and "friendly-unfriendly." These adjective pairs were chosen deliberately to stress Osgood's (1957)"evaluation" factor, using 5 pairs for the "evaluation" factor and one pair each for the "potency" and "activity" factors. For each adjective pair the subject's response was scored from "1" to "6" with "1" indicating positive and "6" negative value. The mean score for these seven adjective pairs was then used as the second "self-esteem" score, with a possible range of from one, indicating high "self-esteem," to six, indicating low "self-esteem."

It was hoped that these two instruments would each measure the same theoretical construct--i.e., the "phenomenal self"--and that both would show a high degree of reliability and concurrent validity, thus strengthening any claims that were made about their resulting measurements. However, a careful study of the split-half reliability showed them to have only a moderate degree of reliability, ranging from a low of +.34 to a high of +.65, and a moderate degree of concurrent validity, with correlations between the two instruments being positive for all groups

with a median correlation of .41.* These reliability and concurrent validity statistics led to the conclusion that the two instruments were measuring aspects of the same theoretical construct but could not be said to be measuring exactly the same construct. Hence any conclusions made about the self-concept from studying either instrument alone would be lacking in completeness. To derive a more complete score for self-concept than either instrument alone provided, a third score was made up which combined the two separate scores.

This third measure was developed by normalizing the distribution of "myself" scores from the semantic differential inventory and comparing them with the distribution of scores from the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem inventory to form a scale of values from one to twenty that were equivalent to the "myself" scores. This was done by assigning the mean score for "myself" a value of thirteen on the third scale and then arbitrarily fixing similar equivalent values from 14 to 20 for "myself" scores above the mean and values from 1 to 12 for "myself" scores below the mean. The scale was developed from data taken from Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians and Northwest Indians and Eskimos originally, 514 cases, and then applied to the other Indian groups. The equivalent value of from one to twenty for each subject's "myself" score was then added to his score from the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem inventory, so that a new score, called "Combined Self," was then devised for each subject. The "Combined Self" score then had a range of three, indicating low "self-esteem" to a high of forty, indicating high "self-esteem"; a normal distribution, and high correlation with each of the two original measures (+.85 or higher with the mean score for the Twenty Statement Self-Esteem inventory and -.80 or higher with the mean score for "myself" from the semantic differential inventory). It was this "Combined Self" score which was used throughout this study as the measure of "self-esteem."

Age and Self-Esteem. The first issue studied was the effect of age upon the "self-esteem" of Indian students. While most self-concept ratings show stability over time for white subjects, some Indian studies have noted that there appears to be a kind of "adolescent crisis" phenomenon among American Indians; i.e., a drop in level of cultural adjustment, school achievement, and self-esteem that occurs about the beginning of adolescence. It is claimed that Indian youngsters drop in school achievement dramatically beginning in the seventh grade and continuing through the rest of high school. The Indian adolescents have a high dropout rate. The Indian adolescent, according to this hypothesis, is caught in a cultural conflict between his native Indian culture and the dominant white culture; he has few adult role models, suffers from what Erikson calls "identity diffusion," and exhibits clinical symptoms of alienation and depression. (Bryde, 1965)

To examine this hypothesis, this study divided the "self-esteem" data into four age groups--one pre-adolescent group, ages 8-11, and three adolescent groups, ages 12-14, 15-17, and 18-20. The results of this breakdown are given in Table 1 for all groups studied.

The data in Table 1 indicate that, while the four largest Indian groups tended to drop in "self-esteem" score between the ages of 8-11 and 12-14, for

---

* For a complete discussion of the validity study, see "The Meaning and Validity of the "Phenomenal Self" for American Indian Students." Series III. No. 7.

only two groups was this drop significant statistically (Plains Indians, $p < .01$, and Southwest Indians, $p < .005$. The three smallest groups, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Urban Indians, increased in "Self-esteem" score between the ages 8-11 and 12-14, although not significantly. Thus these data did not confirm the "adolescent crisis" hypothesis in most cases, although there was a trend supportive of the hypothesis for the four largest Indian groups.

The hypothesis was also not confirmed for the adolescent age groups--ages 12-14, 15-17, and 18-20. For these ages all groups except two--15-17 year old Plains and Urban Indians--tended to increase in "self-esteem" score from the 12-14 year old level, contrary to the expectation derived from the hypothesis. For one group, Northwest Indians, there was a significant rise in "self-esteem" score between the ages 15-17 and 18-20 ($p < .001$). The only group which showed a steady, although slight, drop in "self-esteem" score across all age groups was the Non-Indian Control group, thus indicating that the "adolescent crisis" phenomenon," as it concerns "self-esteem" measured by our instruments does not seem to accurately describe the Indian students in this sample.

In summary, the "self-esteem" scores of the Indian students in this study did tend to decrease from age 8-11 to 12-14, a drop which was significant for two groups out of seven. After age 12-14, however, the "self-esteem" scores tended to increase slightly for ages 15-17 and 18-20, in some cases reaching or surpassing the 8-11 year level. The "adolescent crisis" hypothesis, which predicted that "self-esteem" would decrease markedly between the ages of 8-11 and 12-14 and continue to decrease for older age groups, was not confirmed.*

In evaluating this evidence concerning the "adolescent crisis" hypothesis, it should be remembered that the subjects in this study were all students in school. Since only 60 percent who are in 8th grade stay on to finish high school, school attendance itself tended to act as a selective force, suggesting that Indian young people who attended school were more likely to be "better adjusted," higher in achievement, and commanding higher respect in their communities than their non-school attending peers. Thus the "self-esteem" scores may have reflected the students' awareness of their relatively better position within the Indian community and may not have been an accurate indication of the "self-esteem" patterns of the total population of Indian youths.

Sex and Self-Esteem. In order to better understand the complexity of the Indian self-concept, the results of Table 1 were broken into two groups by sex. Given the widely different sex roles taught by the various Indian groups in this study, it was not feasible to generate a sex difference hypothesis that would be applicable to all groups in this study. Instead, this study sought to find ou out whether the data showed any interesting differences between boys and girls who were students in English-speaking schools and if there appeared to be sex differences with regard to the "adolescent crisis" phenomenon, described above. The results are given in Table 2.

Looking first at age changes across the two sexes, it should be noted

---

* It should be noted that Bryde's thesis tested the "adolescent crisis" phenomenon for Oglala Sioux Indians only. Youth of another Sioux reservation were part of our group of Plains Indians and did show a significant drop in "self-esteem" between the ages 8-11 and 12-14 and a further slight drop in the 15-17 year old group which would seem to give limited support to Bryde's findings.

that Indian girls were more likely than boys to show a significant decrease in "self-esteem" from pre-adolescence to adolescence. Three of the four largest Indian groups showed a significant drop in "self-esteem" between ages 8-11 and 12-14 for girls (Plains Indians, $p < .001$; Southwest Indians, $p < .01$; and Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians, $p < .01$), while only one group showed a significant decrease for boys Southwest Indians, $p < .05$). Thus, if the "adolescent crisis" hypothesis holds at all, it would appear to be a more accurage description of girls than boys. After this drop between pre-adolescence and adolescence, however, both girls and boys "self-esteem" scores tended to increase for ages 15-17 and 18-20, with Northwest Indians and Eskimos showing a significant increase for both boys and girls over the last two age groups (girls, $p < .05$; boys, $p < .025$).

These generalizations did not seem to hold for the Urban Indian group, where girls increased in "self-esteem" while boys decreased from pre-adolescence to adolescence, although neither of these changes was statistically significant when the t test was applied. Also, comparisons with the Non-Indian Control group revealed no such sex difference; both girls and boys in the control group decreased slightly in "self-esteem" across the age groups.

Looking next at sex differences (Table 3) in "self-esteem" scores within age groups, it appeared that there were no significant trends in the pre-adolescent group; three out of five Indian groups rated boys higher than girls, while two rated girls higher. For the adolescent age groups, there was a strong tendency for Indian boys to rate higher in "self-esteem" than girls. Table 4 gives the results of averaging the "self-esteem" scores of males and females for age groups 12-14 and 15-17 with differences and significances derived from t tests for the means.

The only Indian group which consistently produced this strong sex difference was Northwest Indians and Eskimos, where boys rated significantly higher than girls at all age levels. For the other groups, as can be seen in Tables 3 and 4, the adolescent boys produced higher ratings consistently only for the two middle age groups. It should be noted that the Control group did not show this effect; in fact, among the controls adolescent girls tended to rate themselves more positively than the boys. Also noteworthy are the Urban Indians who rated adolescent boys higher than girls, but not significantly so, a finding which seems to put them in the middle between the other Indian groups and the Non-Indian Controls.

There are at least two possible explanations for this sex difference among the adolescent groups. The first is that the semantic differential concept "myself" contained the adjective pair "strong-weak" which as Havighurst notes elsewhere, tended to find boys rating themselves much more positively than girls; i.e., boys tended to rate themselves as being "strong," while girls tended to say they were "weak." The great differences in ratings on this one adjective pair tended to influence the overall rating for "myself" which in turn changed the rating for "Combined Self" in some cases. A second reason is less conclusive. There seems to be a general tendency for adolescent girls to be more self-critical and self-doubting than adolescent boys, in some social groups. We are not prepared to explain this, and there are exceptions.

In sum, the data from this study showed that Indian girls showed a more marked decrease in "self-esteem" rating than boys at adolescence and that Indian girls rated themselves significantly lower in "self-esteem" during adolescence than did boys. These changes were less marked for Urban Indians, while the Non-Indian Control group showed no such sex differences.

Mental Health Interpretation of Self-Esteem Data. Before continuing with our analysis of the self-esteem data, it is appropriate to consider the mental health implications of these data for Indian youth. We have seen that there is little or no drop in self-esteem scores between the age-groups 8-11 and 12-14. We have seen that the differences between boys and girls in self-esteem scores do not appear to have any mental health implications.

What, then, do the self-esteem data signify? If the data are reliable and if the data possess construct validity, we believe that they tell us:

1. How the Indian youth perceives and evaluates his "phenomenological self."
2. How comfortable the Indian youth feels in his present situation. This feeling is influenced by (a) the support he gets from his age-mates; (b) the emotional support he gets from his family and neighbors; and (c) the support he gets from his teachers or employers or other adults with whom he comes into contact.

The self-esteem data reflect the social adjustment of Indian youth rather than their mental health as a psychiatrist would use the term. We doubt that any paper and pencil test would give valid information about the mental health of Indian adolescents in the psychiatric sense. Consequently, we have grave doubts concerning the validity of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory for use with Indian adolescents as a group. The MMPI was created for use in diagnosing adults who might suffer from psychosis. Then it was applied to normal groups of people as a test of tendencies of groups of people toward various kinds of deviant behavior. Though not designed for use with adolescents, it has been used as a group test to compare various groups of adolescents with respect to delinquency and to other forms of deviant behavior. But its validity and its value for use with adolescents to determine their mental health status has been seriously questioned.

This question has been raised by Bernard Spilka, who has made an intensive study of the attitudes of Oglala Sioux adolescents toward school and toward school achievement (1970). He has written:

> A number of researchers on the status and condition of the Indian today have applied personality tests to Indian children and youth. Among these are the MMPI, the Rorschach, and a wide variety of Self-Concept measures. Invariably the results of these studies portray the Indian in "mental health" or "adjustment" terms implying a psychologically disturbed state on the part of the Indian relative to a "normal" and desirable referent for the white child and white society. These notions are both insulting to Indians and conceptually inappropriate. Lost sight of are the heritage of the Indian groups, the conditions under which they currently live and their general place and status relative to the mainstream of American society. . . . The use of "mental health," "medical" and "adjustment" models of behavior for explanatory purposes plus psychological instruments that surreptitiously introduce such assumptions simply work to hide the truth and protect the existing order. (Personal Communication)

The Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory is especially open to criticism as a measure of the Indian adolescent's feelings about himself because many of the items are expressed in language which is difficult for poor readers to understand. Therefore when given to Indian youth in the 8th or 9th grade,

it generally lacks validity. This is seen in the fact that the "F-scale" which is designed to discover respondents who (quoting the authors of the test) were "careless or unable to comprehend items," shows many high scores for the Indian adolescents and therefore indicates that the MMPI is not valid for use with these young people.*

Our conclusion is that the self-esteem and self-concept data from our study indicate that the great majority of Indian youth see themselves as fairly competent persons within their own social world. This social world is characterized for the majority of these young people by Indianness and by poverty. If they come into contact with expectations by teachers or others from the social world of the urban-industrial and middle-class society, we should expect them to show some doubts about their competence, and we should expect the self-esteem to be lowered.

Minority Group Status and Self-Esteem. One of the most frequent assertions of self-concept theorists is that the level of self-esteem is determined by the social context in which the individual exists. The individual comes to know his "self" as it is defined by "significant others" around him, and once a self-concept is firmly rooted it is evaluated according to the responses the individual receives from the "significant others" he later encounters. The level of so-called "self-esteem" then is based upon the individual's perception of himself in relation to others around him and their responses to him. Soares and Soares (1969) used such an explanation to account for the fact that so-called "disadvantaged" youngsters had higher self-esteem ratings than "advantaged" youngsters when they were in elementary school with their "disadvantaged" peers, since the "disadvantaged" students judged themselves in relation to their peers within the homogeneous group. In high school, when the "disadvantaged" youngsters entered a heterogeneous social environment, the Soares found that the self-esteem ratings of the "disadvantaged" students decreased, which the Soares explained resulted from the change in reference group from the homogeneous "disadvantaged" environment of early years to the heterogeneous environment of high school years. Such findings led this study to test out these notions by checking the self-esteem ratings of the Indian students against their status in school, namely, whether the Indian student was in a homogeneous, all-Indian environment or whether he was part of a small minority within a heterogeneous

---

* It is for these reasons that we find it necessary to disagree with the claim by John F. Bryde (1965) that the Sioux Indian adolescents he studied suffered from "severe personality deviations and emotional problems." According to Hathaway and Monachesi (1963) F-scores of 0-15 are within "valid" range, but F-scores of 16 and over indicate that the test is not valid. Bryde reports for eighth grade Indians a mean F-score of 14.61 with a standard deviation of 6.5. This means that approximately 42 percent of these students scored 16 or over on the F-scale. Their scores on the MMPI were all technically invalid. For the ninth grade Indian sample the mean F-score was 13.26, which means that some 35 percent of those students scored 16 or over, and their MMPI scores were technically invalid. Only when he reaches the 12th grade, where the Indian youth no doubt read much better than the 8th or 9th graders, does the mean F-score drop to 8.56. But for 12th grade Indian students there were relatively few MMPI scores reliably different from the scores of white students whom Bryde tested.

environment. The hypothesis was that minority group Indian students would have lower self-esteem ratings than majority group Indian students.

To test this hypothesis the data were divided by schools into four groups, two groups where the Indian students were less than 25 percent of the total school population, urban and rural-small city schools; and two groups where the Indian students were more than 80 percent of the school population, rural-small city and boarding schools. The mean scores for "Combined Self" ratings for these groups are given in Table 5.

The mean scores for these groups reported in Table 5 indicated that both minority groups had significantly lower "self-esteem" ratings (t test, $p < .025$) than rural and small city Indians who were in the majority of students in their schools. However, this difference did not hold for boarding school students in the majority whose scores were lower than all other groups, although not significantly lower than the minority group Indians. Our hypothesis was thus confirmed for rural and small city Indians but unconfirmed for boarding school students.

The self-concept does seem to be formed through interaction with the social environment and does appear to be evaluated within the context of the immediate social group. Thus the notion that lower class "disadvantaged" or "minority group" individuals have lower "self-esteem" ratings because of their status with the total American environment does not necessarily hold. As Soares and Soares noted and this study seemed to confirm, the individual's "self-esteem" is more dependent on the homogeneity of his immediate social environment than upon any larger social status. Thus, our Indian students who attended school in predominantly Indian student populations judged themselves against their Indian peers and rated themselves positively by those standards, while Indians who attended schools in predominantly non-Indian student populations judged themselves by several standards, some of which may have been hostile towards the Indian, so that these minority group Indians rated themselves lower in "self-esteem." For these reasons of complexity, assertions about the level of "self-esteem" of various groups should be made carefully, noting the group standard against which any individual conceptualizes and evaluates his "phenomenal self."

The Boarding school group was important for the qualifications which it forced on these statements about the nature of the "phenomenal self" and its evaluation. While for the purposes of this study the boarding schools were included in the majority Indian student group, their unusually low "self-esteem" scores required that this group be examined more closely.

There were a number of educational and social requirements for admission to boarding school. However, most students came to these schools for one or more of four reasons. First, Indian students who lived in remote areas came because there was no other school available. Second, students who were unusually low in school achievement in public schools were referred to the boarding schools for remedial studies and special training. Third, students who were neglected by their parents or who lived in extremely crowded homes were referred to the schools by social agencies in order to improve their living conditions and to place them in an environment more conducive to school achievement. Fourth, students who showed numerous behavior problems or who were judged delinquent by local authorities were referred to the schools for reform and counseling. These four reasons were represented to varying degrees in the different schools, so that no two schools were exactly comparable.

In most of the boarding schools these students had little contact with their families and relatively little contact with their home communities. Furthermore, while the total Indian student group usually meant that there were strong peer group formations, the staff and orientation of these schools tended to be white, Anglo-Saxon, rather than Indian. Most of the adult role models for these students were Anglo-Saxon. Furthermore, conditions at some of the boarding schools were conducive to low student morale and feelings of isolation, depression, and hopelessness.

For these reasons the boarding school group was unique among other Indian student groups and was characterized by wide differences in both student background and local conditions from school to school. Not all the boarding schools had low "self-esteem" scores, the highest being a school where most students came because there was no school within a long distance from their homes. However, the overall low level of "self-esteem" of the boarding school students seemed to result from the unique circumstances of the students who attended such schools and the unique position which such schools hold in the larger society.

Summary

This study of over 2,000 American Indian students measured the level of "self-esteem" using a Twenty Statement questionnaire and a semantic differential concept "myself" rated across seven adjective pairs. The scores from these two instruments were combined into a third scale, labeled "Combined Self" which was used to describe "self-esteem" in this study. An investigation of the "adolescent crisis" hypothesis revealed that Indian student "self-esteem" did not drop significantly from pre-adolescent to adolescent years for most groups and tended to increase slightly during adolescence, while the Non-Indian Control group decreased slightly in "self-esteem" over the years from ages 8 to 17. These results contradicted the hypothesis proposed by Bryde (1965). The data revealed further a significant sex difference in "self-esteem" ratings with adolescent girls generally rating themselves lower than adolescent boys. The level of "self-esteem" was then studied according to the student's minority or majority group status in his school. This showed that rural and small city Indians who were in the majority in their schools had significantly higher "self-esteem" scores than urban Indians and rural and small city Indians who were in the minority among students at their schools, while boarding school students who were in the majority at their schools had lower "self-esteem" scores than any of the other groups.

Discussion

This study attempted to study "self-esteem" as it related to several major variables, such as age, sex, and the minority group status of Indian students within their respective schools. The results of this study indicated that the "self" concept is a very complex one which must be studied more extensively before it is understood. The conclusion which seemed to emerge most clearly from this study is that the context within which an individual judges himself is critical to attaching meaning to his so-called "self-esteem" ratings. For example, as Soares and Soares noted and this study confirmed, a person who judges his "self" within a homogeneous social environment may rate himself higher in "self-esteem" than another person who judges his "self" within a heterogeneous social environment, so that crude expectations about the "self-esteem" of racial and ethnic minority group members in society cannot be taken seriously until the more immediate social environment of individuals is clearly understood. It is

also possible that an individual may evaluate himself within the context of different social roles that he plays and that personality differences lead some people to be more "self" critical than others.

The emphasis of this study was upon comparing Indian students with other Indian students and not upon the comparison of Indian students with Non-Indian control groups. From Tables 1 and 4 it can be seen that the Non-Indian control group has a higher "self-esteem" rating than almost all of the Indian groups, regardless of age or sex. Before too much is made of this difference it should be remembered that the instruments used to measure "self-esteem" were modeled after instruments developed by white, Anglo researchers originally for use with white, Anglo subjects. Hence, it is likely that the instruments contained cultural biases which would tend to favor non-Indian subjects. It has been noted earlier that concurrent validity correlations for the various groups were not high but tended to be higher for the Control group than for the Indian groups. This led to the speculation that the instruments measured aspects of the Indian "phenomenal self" but not all of it in any absolute sense. For Indians, who are often described as a cooperative rather than a competitive people, the "self-concept" may be best described by factors which the instruments in this study did not measure, so that comparisons of the Indians and Non-Indians in this study may reflect the cultural bias of the instruments used rather than real differences in "self-esteem." Again, this points to the complexity of the "phenomenal self" and the need to exercise caution in making statements about the "self-esteem" of groups who have different cultural traditions and values than those of the researchers.

Table 1

MEAN "COMBINED SELF" SCORES FOR AGE GROUPS

	1 8-11			2 12-14			3 15-17			4 18-20		
	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD
Plains Indians	(142)	27.4	6.1	(168)	25.8	5.9	(133)	25.5	5.9	(52)	26.5	5.8
Southwest Indians	(92)	26.7	6.9	(257)	24.3	5.9	(213)	25.3	5.7	(197)	25.0	6.1
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(25)	27.0	5.7	(89)	25.3	5.7	(148)	25.9	6.1	(67)	28.7	5.9
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(22)	26.3	4.9	(111)	25.4	6.4	(49)	26.2	4.5			
No. Carolina Indians	(10)	29.2	5.5	(14)	29.4	4.0	(33)	31.1	3.7			
Oklahoma Indians	(14)	23.4	7.3	(31)	25.7	7.2	(11)	28.3	4.9	(9)	29.8	4.4
Urban Indians	(21)	25.5	7.4	(81)	25.6	6.4	(12)	23.4	5.4			
Non-Indian Controls	(63)	30.3	6.2	(47)	28.9	5.6	(57)	28.4	5.7			

Note: Probabilities of differences greater than those given:

Group 1-2 (Plains Indians) $p < .01$

1-2 (Southwest Indians) $p < .005$

4-3 (Northwest Indians) $p < .001$

Table 2

MEAN "COMBINED SELF"SCORES FOR AGE GROUPS BY SEX

M A L E S

Age Group	1 8-11			2 12-14			3 15-17			4 18-20		
	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD
Plains Indians	(67)	26.8	6.3	(83)	27.2	4.7	(60)	26.1	5.2	(32)	26.5	5.4
Southwest Indians	(47)	26.9	6.5	(125)	24.9	6.0	(111)	26.2	5.5	(112)	25.9	5.8
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(15)	28.6	5.3	(47)	26.5	5.0	(77)	27.3	5.3	(47)	29.3	5.2
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(11)	25.1	5.1	(56)	27.1	5.9	(30)	26.0	4.3			
Urban Indians	(11)	26.5	8.8	(44)	25.9	7.3	(4)	23.8	4.1			
Non-Indian Controls	(39)	29.7	6.1	(26)	28.0	5.6	(22)	28.8	6.7			

Significance of Differences: Plains (2-1) N.S.; Southwest (1-2) $p < .05$; Northwest (4-3) $p < .025$; Minnesota (2-1) N.S.

F E M A L E S

Age Group	1 8-11			2 12-14			3 15-17			4 18-20		
	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD
Plains Indians	(75)	27.9	5.9	(85)	24.5	6.6	(73)	24.9	6.4	(20)	26.5	6.6
Southwest Indians	(45)	26.6	7.3	(132)	23.8	5.9	(102)	24.4	5.7	(85)	23.8	6.4
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(10)	24.7	5.6	(42)	23.9	6.1	(71)	24.5	6.6	(20)	27.3	7.3
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(11)	27.5	4.5	(55)	23.7	6.5	(19)	26.4	4.9			
Urban Indians	(10)	24.4	5.8	(37)	25.3	5.4	(8)	23.3.6.2				
Non-Indian Controls	(24)	31.2	6.5	(21)	30.0	5.4	(30)	28.6	5.1			

Significance of Differences: Plains (1-2) $p < .001$; Southwest (1-2) $p < .01$; Northwest (4-3) $p < .05$; Minnesota (1-2) $p < .01$; (3-2) p .05.

Table 3

COMPARISON OF SELF-CONCEPT SCORES BY SEX

Mean Scores by Age Group

	8-11		12-14		15-17		18-20	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Plains Indians	26.8	27.9	27.2	24.5	26.1	24.9	26.5	26.5
Southwest Indians	26.9	26.6	24.9	23.8	26.2	24.4	25.9	23.8
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	28.6	24.7	26.5	23.9	27.3	24.5	29.3	27.3
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	25.1	27.5	27.1	23.7	26.0	26.4		
Urban Indians	26.5	24.4	25.9	25.3	23.8	23.3		
Non-Indian Controls	29.7	31.2	28.0	30.0	28.8	28.6		

Table 4

MEAN "COMBINED SELF" SCORES FOR AGE GROUPS 12-17

Males and Females

	Males			Females			M-F Diff.	t Test Significance
	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD	(N)	$\bar{X}$	SD		
Plains Indians	(143)	26.8	4.9	(158)	24.6	6.5	2.2	$p < .001$
Southwest Indians	(236)	25.5	5.8	(234)	24.1	5.8	1.4	$p < .055$
Northwest Indians and Eskimos	(124)	27.0	4.9	(113)	24.2	6.4	2.8	$p < .001$
Minnesota-Wisconsin Indians	(86)	26.7	5.2	(74)	25.2	6.1	1.5	$p < .05$
Urban Indians	(48)	25.8	7.0	(45)	25.0	5.5	.8	N.S.
Non-Indian Controls	(48)	28.4	6.1	(51)	29.2	5.2	-.8	N.S.

Table 5

MEAN "COMBINED SELF" SCORES FOR INDIAN STUDENTS WHO ARE IN A MAJORITY AND MINORITY AMONG STUDENT IN THEIR SCHOOLS

	(N)	Mean Score	SD
Minority Indian Students (0 - 25%)			
Urban Indians (Chicago and Minneapolis)	(114)	25.4	6.6
Rural and Small City Indians Cut Bank, Montana; Shawano, Wisconsin; Pawnee, Oklahoma; Moclips, Washington; Ponca City, Oklahoma (High School).	(188)	25.7	6.0
Majority Indian Students (80 - 100%)			
Rural and Small City Indians Eagle Butte, So. Dakota; Browning, Montana; Todd County, So. Dakota; St. Joseph, Wisconsin; Ponca City, Oklahoma (Elementary).	(283	26.9	6.1
Boarding School Indians St. Francis Mission, So. Dakota; Phoenix Indian, Arizona; Flagstaff Dormitory, Arizona; Chemawa, Oregon; Theodore Roosevelt, Arizona; Shonto, Arizona.	(534)	24.8	5.7

A P P E N D I X

Bibliography for Papers on Mental Health of Indian Children and Youth

(Articles III:7-10, by Dreyer and Havighurst)

Ablon, Joan. "Relocated American Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area: Social Interaction and Indian Identity," Human Organization, 1964, 23, 296-304.

Berreman, Gerald D. "Aleut Reference Group Alienation, Mobility, and Acculturation," American Anthropologist, 66, April 1964, 231-250.

Boggs, Stephen T. "Culture Change and the Personality of Ojibwa Children," American Anthropologist, 1958, 60, 47-58.

Bryde, John, The Sioux Indian Student: A Study of Scholastic Failure and Personality Conflict. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, Inc., 1965.

Butler, J. M. and Haigh, G.V. "Changes in the Relation Between Self-concepts and Ideal Concepts Consequent Upon Client-Centered Counseling," in Rogers, C.R. and Dymond, Rosalind F. (eds.), Psychotherapy and Personality. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954, 55-75.

Chance, Norman A. "Acculturation, Self-identification, and Personality Adjustment," American Anthropologist, 67, April, 1965, 372-393.

Coleman, James S. Equality of Educational Opportunity. Washington: United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1966.

Coopersmith, Stanley. "A Method for Determining Types of Self-esteem." Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1959, 59, 87-94.

Coopersmith, Stanley. The Antecedents of Self-Esteem. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1967.

Couch, Carl J. "Family Role Specialization and Self-Attitudes in Children." The Sociological Quarterly, III, April, 1962, 115-121.

Cronbach, Lee J., Essentials of Psychological Testing. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1960.

Cronbach, Lee J. & Meehl, P.E. "Construct Validity in Psychological Tests," Psychological Bulletin, 1955, 4, 281-303.

Davidson, Helen H. & Greenberg, Judith, Traits of School Achievers from a Deprived Background. New York: Associated Educational Services Corp., 1967

Davidson, Helen H. & Lang, G. "Children's Perceptions of Their Teachers' Feelings Toward Them Related to Self-Perception, School Achievement, and Behavior." Journal of Experimental Education, 1965, Vol. 2: (6), 817-822.

Deutsch, Martin, Katz, Irwin, & Jensen, Arthur R., Eds. Social Class, Race, and Psychological Development. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1968.

DiVesta, F. J. and Dick, W. "The Test-Retest Reliability of Children's Ratings on the Semantic Differential." Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1966, 26, 605-617.

Fagan, Thomas K. and Wonderly, Donald M. "The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Reading Achievement in Low Participant Children." Ideas Educational, 1969, Vol. 7, No. 2, 39-43.

Faris, R. J. "High and Low Achievement of Intellectually Average Intermediate Grade Students Related to the Self-Concept and Social Approval." Dissertation Abstracts, 1967, 28, 1205.

Fennimore, C. A. "Reading and Self-Concept." Journal of Reading, 1968, 11, 447-451.

Hathaway, Starke R. and Monachesi, E.D. Adolescent Personality and Behavior. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963.

_____ _____ An Atlas of Juvenile MMPI Profiles. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961.

Hathaway, S. R. and McKinley, J.C. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Manua: New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1951.

Havighurst, Robert J. et al. A Cross-National Study of Buenos Aires and Chicago Adolescents. (Bibliotheca "Vita Humana" Fasc.3) New York and Basel (Switzerland), 1965.

Heise, David R. "Some Methodological Issues in Semantic Differential Research." Psychological Bulletin, 1969, 72, 406-422.

Helper, Malcolm M. and Garfield, S. L. "Use of the Semantic Differential to Study Acculturation in American Indian Adolescents." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1965, Vol. 2 (6), 817-822.

Hughes, Charles Campbell, "The Patterning of Recent Cultural Change in a Siberian Eskimo Village," Journal of Social Issues, 1958, 14, No. 4, 27-37.

James. B. J. "Socio-Psychological Dimensions of Ojibwa Acculturation." American Anthropologist, 1961, 63, 721-746.

Ketcham, C. A. "Factors in Home Background and Reader Self-Concept Which Relate to Reading Achievement." Dissertation Abstracts, 1967, 28, 1308.

Kumata, Hideya and Schramm, Wilbur, "A Pilot Study of Cross-Cultural Meaning." Public Opinion Quarterly, 1956, 20: 229-238.

Kumata, Hideya, A Factor Analytic Investigation of the Generality of Semantic Structure Across Two Selected Cultures. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1957.

La Belle, Thomas J. "Attitudes and Academic Achievement Among Male and Female Anglo and Spanish-American Fifth Grade Students." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1969.

Lee, Dorothy, "Notes on the Conception of the Self Among the Wintu Indians." Journal of Abnormal Psychology. 45: 538-43, July, 1950.

Long, Barbara H., Henderson, Edmund H., and Ziller, Robert C. "Self-Ratings on the Semantic Differential: Content Versus Response Set." Child Development, June, 1968, Vol. 39, No.2, 647-656.

Maltz, H. E. "Ontogenetic Changes in the Meaning of Concepts as Measured by the Semantic Differential." Child Development, 1963, 34, 667-674.

Macgregor, G., Warriors Without Weapons. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946.

Osgood, Charles E., Suci, G. J., and Tannenbaum, P. H., The Measurement of Meaning. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957.

Osgood, Charles E., "Semantic Differential Technique in the Comparative Study of Cultures." American Anthropologist, 1964, 66: 171-200.

Ozehosky, R. J. "Children's Self-Concept and Kindergarten Achievement." Dissertation Abstracts, 1967, 28, 1308.

Parker, Seymour. "Ethnic Identity and Acculturation in Two Eskimo Communities." American Anthropologist, April 1964, 66, 325-340.

Randle, Martha Champion. "Iroquois Women, then and now." in Fenton, W.N. (ed.) Symposium on Local Diversity in Iroquois Culture, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 149.

Rogers, Carl R., Client-centered Therapy. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951.

Rosenberg, M., Society and the Adolescent Self-Image. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965.

Snygg, D. and Combs, A. W. "The Phenomenological Approach and the Problem of 'Unconscious' Behavior: A Reply to Dr. Smith." Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1950, 45, 523-528.

Smith, M. Brewster, "The Phenomenological Approach to Personality Theory: Some Critical Remarks." Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1950, 45, 516-522.

Soares, Anthony T. and Soares, Louise M. "Interpersonal and Self-Perceptions of Disadvantaged and Advantaged High School Students." Proceedings, American Psychological Association, 1970, 457-458.

_____ "Self-Concepts of Disadvantaged and Advantaged Students." Proceedings, American Psychological Association, 1970, 655-656.

_____ "Self-Perceptions of Culturally Disadvantaged Children." American Educational Research Journal, 1969, 6, 31-45.

Spilka, Bernard. Alienation and Achievement Among Oglala Sioux Secondary School Students. Report to National Institute of Mental Health. Bethesda, Md. August, 1970.

Suci, George J., "A Comparison of Semantic Structures in American Southwest Culture Groups." Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1960, 61: 25-30.

Tanaka, Yasumasa, Oyama, Tadasu, and Osgood, Charles E., "A Cross-Cultural and Cross-Concept Study of the Generality of Semantic Space." Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 1963, 2: 392-405.

Triandis, H. and Osgood, Charles E., "A Comparative Factorial Analysis of Semantic Structures of Monolingual Greek and American College Students." Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1958, 57: 187-196.

Voget, Fred. "American Indians in Transition: Reformation and Status Innovations. (Handsome Lake's Great Message, Shakerism, and Peyotism)." American Journal of Sociology, 1957, 62, 369-378.

Williams, R. L. and Cole, S. "Self-Concept and School Adjustment." Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1968, 46, 478-481.

Wylie, Ruth C., The Self-Concept. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961.